

Markets in Crisis

Integrating Gender into Emergency Market Assessments: Lessons Learned from the IRC's PCMMA Pilot in Niger

Introduction

In many contexts, men are the dominant players in market systems. Though women are often involved in the production and consumption of goods and services, women's roles tend to be less official, influential and visible than those played by men. Unless a conscious effort is made to include women's perspectives in humanitarian market assessments, they can easily be overlooked. This factsheet summarizes the key findings and recommendations related to gender analysis from the International Rescue Committee's (IRC's) Pre-Crisis Market Mapping Analysis (PCMMA) pilot study in Niger.

PCMMA is a relatively new approach to conducting market assessments in contexts where a future crisis is anticipated, loosely based on the Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) Toolkit. The Niger pilot took place from 29 June to 15 July 2015 in Niger's Tillaberi Region. The team examined how past floods had impacted the cabbage and goat market systems in order to predict the likely impact of future floods and to propose appropriate market-based preparedness and response interventions. The study was also intended to generate learning about the PCMMA approach itself.

Ideally, a gender-integrated market assessment would identify the different roles that women and men play in a particular market system, analyze the factors (e.g., cultural, political, physical) that determine these roles and examine how these roles and factors change in a crisis. The assessment team can use this information to develop gendered response options. The guidance documents for both EMMA and PCMMA have some basic recommendations for integrating gender into assessments; however, this integration is not brought out as a main goal, nor are readers provided with practical, concrete guidance on how to achieve it.

Approach

In the weeks leading up to the Niger PCMMA, two important steps were taken to integrate gender considerations into the assessment. The first was to assign a gender focal point, a

member of the team whose role was to consider gender as a main aspect of the study, brief the other team leaders on its importance and continuously monitor and encourage efforts at gender integration throughout the study. The second step was to systematize gender within the study by incorporating it into the key analytical questions that guided the overall study. For both market systems, one of these key guiding questions – namely, how the crisis situation impacted men and women within that market system differently – focused specifically on gender.

To respond to this question, survey tools were designed to ask about the roles that men and women played in the market system in the baseline and crisis periods and the impact of flooding on men and women's respective income and assets. Information was solicited via both one-on-one questionnaires and gender-segregated focus group discussions (FGDs). Care was taken to ensure that a representative number of women were interviewed during household and vendor interviews.

Lessons Learned

What worked?

While the local staff had a strong knowledge of market systems, they had limited knowledge of gender dimensions in market systems. However, once the team members were briefed on the study's gender component, they were quick to recognize its relevance.

Using various types of data collection techniques aided the team in getting a more robust picture of gender roles within the market systems. Household and vendor questionnaires proved very useful because they were relatively quick to administer and generated data that was easy to analyze, which was complemented by information from key informant interviews and FGDs.

Questions in the household questionnaires about "usual" gender roles within the market system and the crisis' impact on those roles proved to be informative. In most cases, the respondents denied any shift in gender roles from pre- to post-crisis; however this question paved the way for the team to ask about how NGOs might respond to the crisis in a way

that would suit both genders and could perhaps bring about greater gender equality.

“The study helped identify which specific tasks women and men carry out within the cabbage market system...These details could potentially help to guide livelihoods programming, for example, in finding ways to involve women in tasks that are currently done only by men.”

– Team Leader

Challenges

Most team members were men. While the FGDs were gender segregated, men conducted the women’s FGDs and most household questionnaires. Though over half of the respondents were women, there was only one woman on the assessment team.

Although gender integration was introduced during the pre-planning phase and was discussed in more detail during the two-day team leader workshop that preceded the design of the data collection tools, the relatively short time available for all aspects of the study limited the depth to which questions of gender could be explored.

Recommendations

Gender should be considered during each step of the assessment. Each of the following recommendations refers to a specific step or steps from the EMMA Toolkit; however, they could also be applied to the equivalent step of the approach outlined in the PCMMA guidance document.

Step 1 – Essential Preparation:

- Include gender analysis as part of the situational analysis in the socio-economic profile of the population affected by the crisis.
- Aim for a gender-balanced assessment team that includes qualified female enumerators/staff.
- Appoint someone with a strong understanding of gender as a “gender focal point” to ensure that gender is included in all steps of the assessment.

Step 2 – Market Selection:

- Consider gender in critical market selection and the development of key analytical questions.

Step 3 – Preliminary Analysis:

- Include key information about gender roles in the chosen market systems in preliminary market maps and seasonal calendars.

Step 4 – Preparation for Fieldwork:

- Integrate appropriate gender-specific questions into the assessment tools based on information gaps and guiding questions.
- Encourage team members to explore gender-related questions that are not on the official questionnaires if interesting information arises.
- Ensure the database being utilized allows for gender-disaggregated analysis.

Step 5 – Fieldwork Activities & Interviews:

- Supervise and coach field staff to reinforce understanding of gender aspects.
- Where possible, female team members should facilitate potentially sensitive household interviews and FGDs with women.
- Interviews and FGDs should take place in an environment that is safe (gender segregated, private) for participants.
- Team leaders should regularly check with team members to review information gathered and discuss needed adaptations to survey tools.
- Team leaders should share gender-disaggregated data with team members on a daily basis to assess whether the information being gathered is useful or if early course correction is needed.

Steps 6 - 9: Mapping the Market, Gap Analysis, Market Analysis and Response Analysis

- Highlight key gender-related findings, respond to gender-specific key analytical questions and develop gender-specific recommendations where appropriate.

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